



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

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*86 Chambers Street  
New York, New York 10007*

October 7, 2024

**BY ECF**

The Honorable Andrew L. Carter, Jr.  
United States District Judge  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square, Room 2203  
New York, NY 10007

Re: *Knight First Amendment Institute v. U.S. Dep't of Homeland Security et al.*,  
No. 17 Civ. 7572 (ALC)

Dear Judge Carter:

I write respectfully on behalf of both parties in the above-referenced FOIA action to provide a status update.

**Background**

As the Court is aware, various defendant agencies and components agreed to conduct a search for documents responsive to Item Number 1 in Plaintiff's FOIA Request, and the United States Department of State ("State"), Customs and Border Protection ("CBP"), Department of Justice ("DOJ"), Homeland Security ("DHS"), and Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS") have completed searching, processing, and producing responsive, non-exempt documents, if any. *See* Dkt. No. 171. As the parties previously detailed at length, Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") and Plaintiff agreed on specific search terms, and as of October 2023, ICE completed processing and producing all remaining responsive documents. Accordingly, all defendants in this matter have now completed searching for, processing, and producing documents responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA Requests.

**Current Status**

As we have previously noted, plaintiff has agreed to dismiss with prejudice all claims in this action (except for any claims for attorney's fees and costs) against the following agencies and/or components: DOJ, USCIS, and CBP. The agencies and/or components remaining in this action are therefore ICE, State, and DHS.

As the parties also previously detailed, Plaintiff identified certain records produced by ICE, State, and DHS that contain redactions pursuant to various FOIA exemptions that Plaintiff might challenge through a motion for summary judgment, and Plaintiff has asked the agencies to prepare draft Vaughn indices further explaining the bases for the exemptions. As of the last status report,

the only records that required a draft Vaughn index were certain records that ICE located in its own searches and processed for ICE equities, and were then referred to DHS HQ for processing any DHS HQ equities. Since the last status report, DHS HQ has provided plaintiff a draft Vaughn index of these records. The parties intend to continue to confer about any remaining issues.

To allow these discussions to continue, the parties respectfully propose to file a further status update by November 7, 2024.

I thank the Court for its attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

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United States Attorney

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